

Rep. Ellen Tauscher Secures \$7.4 Million for Flood Control, Water Supply and Quality, and Environmental Projects In and Around the East Bay

FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE

CONTACT: Kevin Lawlor, 202/225-1880

July 17, 2007

www.house.gov/tauscher

Rep. Ellen Tauscher Secures \$7.4
Million for Flood Control, Water Supply and Quality, and Environmental
Projects In and Around the East Bay

Washington,
DC — Rep.

Ellen Tauscher announced today approximately \$7.4 million she secured in federal investment for a wide range of projects impacting the local environment, water quality, and flood control in and around the East Bay.

The projects are part of the 2008 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill, which passed the House of Representatives this evening by the veto proof margin of 312-112.

"We live in some of the most beautiful communities in the country, and with the help of federal funding for these projects we can continue to raise the quality of life for ourselves and our children," said Rep. Ellen Tauscher. "These programs clean-up and protect our environment, improve our water quality and help protect local communities from flooding. I am proud to have fought for this funding and look forward to implementing these projects back home."

Mary Piepho, Chair of the Board of Supervisors of Contra Costa County had the following to say about the project funding, "On behalf of the Board and the people of Contra Costa County, we thank Congresswoman Tauscher for her leadership on cleanup of the Mt. Diablo Mercury Mine, by securing \$525,000 for the project in the House Energy and Water Appropriations bill. Marsh Creek drains into San Francisco Bay, and 95% of all the mercury in Marsh Creek comes from two tributaries around the mine. Cleanup of the mine will substantially reduce the amount of mercury in the Bay and our ecosystem. This project was the County's number one federal funding priority for the year. The Congresswoman's dedicated effort on the County's behalf has put us much closer to realizing our goal of cleaning up this polluted watershed."

A list of the priorities Rep. Tauscher requested as earmarks and secured funding for follows:

San Pablo Bay
and Mare Island Strait -- \$2,650,000
-- The Pinole Shoal Channel, located in San Pablo Bay, is a major shipping route through the San Francisco Bay region. The channel was regularly

dredged until the closure of Mare Island Naval Base in the mid-1990s. This project is for maintenance dredging of the channel to its authorized depth of minus 35 feet.

Dredged material will be used to re-create historic wetlands at the Hamilton Airfield in Novato, when this site becomes available, or may be used to rehabilitate levees in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

This project is a priority for Contra Costa County, and was also supported by Congressman George Miller.

Mt. Diablo

Mercury Mine Cleanup -- \$525,000

-- This phase of the project will complete the preliminary design and planning studies for cleaning up the Mount Diablo Mercury Mine in the Marsh Creek watershed. The funding will be used in the development of model agreements and processes that can be utilized by other mine clean-up projects throughout the nation.

The Mount Diablo Mercury Mine is a large abandoned mercury mine with substantial exposed mine tailings and a settling pond on the northeast slope of Mount Diablo, located at the upper end of the Marsh Creek watershed in eastern Contra Costa County. Remediation of the mine would dramatically reduce levels of mercury washed into the Marsh Creek Watershed and downstream into the Bay, thereby decreasing the level of mercury in fish to meet health standards and improving public health and safety through the reduction of mercury within the watershed.

This was a joint request with Reps. George Miller and Jerry McNerney.

Walnut Creek

Basin (Grayson & Murderer's Creeks)

-- \$200,000 -- The project is an on-going Feasibility Study by the Army Corps of Engineers of unimproved Grayson Creek and Murderer's Creek in the cities of Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek. The study is intended to determine the economic justification for a federal flood control project to mitigate flooding in the Pleasant Hill area. It is also evaluating alternatives of constructing a detention basin and bypass pipes to control the flooding while enhancing existing stream channels and providing ecosystem restoration.

This project responds to concern for flooding in a neighborhood where approximately 400 homes were recently added to FEMA's 100-year floodplain maps. The project will evaluate alternatives of constructing a detention basin and bypass pipes to control the flooding while enhancing the existing stream channels and providing ecosystem restoration.

This project is a priority for Contra Costa County, and was also supported by Congressman George Miller.

Lower Walnut

Creek -- \$600,000

-- The Lower Walnut Creek Project is a reevaluation study of a channel constructed in the 1960s by the Army Corps of Engineers that incorporates a new way of approaching the traditional methods of operating and maintaining a flood control facility. The new approach will provide the necessary capacity to handle floodwaters while reducing de-silting costs and creating additional wetlands, riparian habitat, recreation, and re-vegetation potential. The project will also explore the feasibility of providing fish passage farther upstream, past the first major drop structure, for listed species such as steelhead and Chinook salmon.

The Flood Control District has been working with the Army Corps since 2002 to complete the reevaluation study. In 2007, the Corps placed the project on the national list of "Levees of Maintenance Concern"; and gave the Flood Control District one year to correct the project deficiencies. These project deficiencies can only be corrected when the study is complete, so it is essential to receive full funding for this year.

This project is a priority for Contra Costa County, and was also supported by Congressman George Miller.

Sacramento

Deepwater Ship Channel -- \$900,000

-- The project will dredge 35 miles of ship channel an additional 35 feet. The Corps has required a Limited Reevaluation Report (LRR) be conducted to re-examine and reconfirm certain regulatory issues. The appropriation will complete the LRR, including environmental studies, within the fiscal year 2008 capabilities of the Corps.

The project will benefit the local and regional economies and environment by more efficiently transporting cargo in and out of the Northern California region. The project provides environmental benefit by reducing traffic demand on the congested Bay Area to Sacramento I-80 corridor and by reducing air pollution by increasing the number of ships versus trucks. The channel deepening will make an estimated 8 million cubic yards of uncontaminated dredge material available for flood levee repairs, thereby directly protecting millions of Californians and ensuring fresh water vital to the economy of California. This dredge material is also a valuable resource for wetland habitat restoration.

San Francisco

Bay to Stockton Channel -- \$300,000

-- A General Reevaluation Report (GRR) was initiated in July 2002 to further investigate the potential for deepening a section of the navigational system from San Francisco Bay to the Port of Stockton. Originally authorized for a deepening of ten feet, the project is now being contemplated for a five-foot deepening only, due to constraints associated with a ten-foot deepening.

Funding would be used to complete the project's reevaluation, including detailed channel design, a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Report, cost analysis, additional numeric modeling and a current evaluation of dredged material disposal options.

This was a joint request with

Rep. Jerry McNerney.

Pinole Shoal

Management Study -- \$500,000

-- The project is a critical component in the provision of material for levee repair and environmental restoration in the Delta as well as to ship channel and port dredging and disposal projects, including the Ports of Sacramento and Stockton dredging, a number of in-Delta channel dredging projects, San Francisco-Stockton deepening, and the Suisun Bay Channel and San Pablo Bay maintenance projects.

The intent of the Delta

Long-term Management Strategy process is to first establish a Sediment or Dredged Material Management Office staffed by all permitting agencies, to streamline the permit process in the Delta. In the longer term, preparation of a Sediment Management Plan will consider beneficial reuse of dredged materials as one potential source of sediment for levees, similar to what was accomplished for the San Francisco Bay Area during the 1990s.

This project is a priority for

Contra Costa County, and was also supported by Congressman George Miller.

Suisun Bay

Channel -- \$3,343,000

-- This project is for maintenance dredging of the Suisun Bay Channel and New York Slough Channel to their authorized depth of minus 35 feet. Continued maintenance of these channel sections is essential to the continued safe transport of crude oil and other bulk materials through San Francisco Bay, along the Carquinez Strait and into the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Due to severe shoaling in a

section of this channel, an oil tanker ran aground in early 2001. The potential for an oil spill is significant when a grounding occurs, making annual dredging imperative. Annual dredging and maintaining authorized depth is necessary to prevent additional incidents.

This project is a priority for

Contra Costa County, and was also supported by Congressman George Miller.

Contra Costa

Water District Alternative Intake -- \$1,000,000

-- The Alternative Intake Project is a water quality project designed to help protect CCWD's customers from seasonal fluctuations and long-term degradation of water quality in the Delta by constructing a new drinking water intake in the Delta. The project is the most significant CALFED drinking water quality project to complete planning studies and be ready for design and construction. The project will locate a new drinking water intake and fish screen on Victoria Canal allowing CCWD to divert higher quality water at certain times of the year. The intake will give CCWD flexibility in the timing and location of pumping which will provide a benefit to Delta fisheries, including Delta Smelt which is in the federal government's interest and is consistent with the Central Valley Project Improvement Act. The new intake will provide water quality benefits to CCWD by changing the location and timing of diversions, but will not increase total diversions. The Project will include a new 250 cubic feet per second intake and pump station, levee improvements, and a buried pipeline. The total project cost, including planning, design and construction, is

estimated at \$100 million. Funding for the project will come from a combination of resources including a local, state and federal cost share. The Project is currently in design and could begin construction as early as spring 2008.

CALFED Levee

System Integrity Program --

In October 2004, the CALFED Bay Delta Reauthorization Act was passed, which among other things, requires the Corps to complete a 180-Day Report detailing how funding would be spent before \$90 million dollars (which has been authorized) may be appropriated and spent on levee rehabilitation activities. The 180-Day Study components include the collaborative Delta Risk Assessment Strategy (DRMS), a Levee Stability Reconstruction Projects and Priorities Report, and a Delta Levee Emergency and Response Plan. \$500,000 was appropriated in 2006 to complete the 180-Day Report, which is has been submitted to Congress. With additional funds, the Corps plans to continue project-specific feasibility studies and environmental documentation on priority levee projects (based on soon-to-be-selected 180-Day Report results). President Bush did not request any funding for this critically important project in his budget.

To date, little funding has been allocated for levee repair as part of the CALFED Bay Delta program, despite its stated priority as an element included in CALFED's Record of Decision implementing document. Without levees, other resources would be in greater peril; as a result, funds for levee repair would benefit other CALFED priorities as well.

Funding for these projects is subject to approval by the Senate and then President Bush. The appropriations process is expected to be complete by the start of the next fiscal year on October 1, 2007.

###